

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: INR ASSESSMENT OF WESTERN SAHARA ISSUE

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN INR ASSESSMENT OF THE  
WESTERN SAHARA SITUATION. WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. OVERVIEW: THE SAHARA QUESTION CONTINUES TO BE THE FOCUS OF DEEP-SEATED ANTAGONISM BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. WHILE THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE AVOIDED A DIRECT MILITARY CONFLICT, THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WESTERN SAHARA HAS BEEN WAGED ON THREE FRONTS:

--A MODERATE LEVEL OF MILITARY HOSTILITIES BETWEEN POLISARIO GUERRILLAS AND MOROCCAN REGULAR UNITS;

--A FIERCE DIPLOMATIC COMPETITION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS; AND

--STEADY PROGRESS BY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD ON THE AREA.

3. DESPITE THIS ACTIVITY, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SAHARAN SITUATION OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. INSTEAD, WE FORESEE THESE DEVELOPMENTS:

--THE POLISARIO FRONT WILL CONTINUE ITS HIT-AND-RUN RAIDS, BUT AT A LEVEL TOLERABLE TO MOROCCO.

--MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WILL CONTINUE TO CONTROL THE MAIN POPULATION CENTERS AND TO ADMINISTER THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF THE SAHARA.

--NEITHER MOROCCO NOR ALGERIA SHOWS ANY WILLINGNESS TO MAKE THE COMPROMISES NEEDED FOR A SETTLEMENT, BUT NEITHER WILL TRY TO WIDEN THE CONFLICT.

--ALGERIA WILL SEEK TO KEEP THE ISSUE OF SELF-DETERMINATION ALIVE IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, BUT THE WIDESPREAD PERCEPTION IN THE THIRD WORLD THAT MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN CONTROL IS AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT WILL CONTINUE TO LIMIT SUPPORT FOR ALGERIA'S POSITION LARGELY TO A NUMBER OF  
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RADICAL AND COMMUNIST STATES.

--THE SOVIETS, SEEKING TO PRESERVE THEIR PRESENCE IN MOROCCO, WILL REMAIN PUBLICLY NEUTRAL, DESPITE THEIR CLOSER TIES TO ALGERIA.

4. DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE SAHARA: MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRES DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS IN DIVIDING UP THE SAHARA. ON APRIL 14, IN AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH FORMAL SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE WESTERN SAHARA, RABAT AND NOUAKCHOTT ANNOUNCED THAT THEY HAD AGREED TO PARTITION THE DISPUTED TERRITORY: MOROCCO ACQUIRED THE NORTHERN TWO-THIRDS OF THE SAHARA,

CONTAINING THE CAPITAL OF EL AAIUN AND THE RICH PHOSPHATE DEPOSITS AT BU CRAA; MAURITANIA GOT THE SOUTHERN THIRD, INCLUDING RICH MARINE RESOURCES, THE UNEXPLOITED IRON ORE AT AGRACHA, AND THE EXCELLENT PORT OF DAKHLA.

5. MOROCCAN ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION. IN AN EFFORT TO INTEGRATE THE NORTHERN SAHARA INTO THE MOROCCAN "MOTHERLAND," RABAT HAS SENT PERSONNEL FROM SEVERAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES TO WORK IN THE THREE NEWLY ACQUIRED PROVINCES:

--MOROCCAN CIVILIAN GOVERNORS AND LESSER FUNCTIONARIES ARE NOW SERVING IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITALS OF EL AAIUM, SEMARA, AND BOUJADOR, WHILE PASHAS AND CAIDS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO SMALLER CITIES AND TOWNS.

--THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS ESTABLISHED THREE REGIONAL OFFICES AND STAFFED THEM WITH TECHNICAL PERSONNEL.

--POSTAL, TELEPHONE, AND AIR LINKS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

6. IN ADDITION, KING HASSAN'S GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED A BOND DRIVE DURING THE SUMMER TO RAISE \$230 MILLION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE SAHARAN PROVINCES OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PHOSPHATES AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

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7. IN THE COMING MONTHS, RABAT WILL ATTEMPT TO CONSOLIDATE POPULAR SUPPORT BY ALLOWING THE SAHARANS TO VOTE IN THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS LATER THIS FALL.

8. HASSAN'S ARMY UNDER ATTACK. THE MOROCCANS HAVE HAD ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS IN ESTABLISHING MILITARY SECURITY IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA. ASIDE FROM A FEW LARGE-SCALE SWEEPING OPERATIONS OF MARGINAL EFFECTIVENESS, MOROCCAN FORCES HAVE CONCENTRATED ON MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE PRINCIPAL POPULATION CENTERS AND THE MAJOR OASES. AS A RESULT OF THIS TACTIC, POLISARIO GUERRILLAS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MINE ROADS AND CARRY OUT NUMEROUS SMALL AMBUSHES AND MORTAR ATTACKS IN BOTH THE NORTHERN SAHARA AND SOUTHERN MOROCCO. THE GUERRILLAS ARE NOW ABLE TO MOVE ABOUT FAR MORE FREELY THAN WAS THE CASE A FEW MONTHS AGO.

9. POLISARIO HIT-AND-RUN OPERATIONS HAVE KILLED 700-800 MOROCCAN SOLDIERS SINCE LAST NOVEMBER AND HAVE WOUNDED SEVERAL TIMES THAT NUMBER. MORALE AMONG THE UNITS IN THE SAHARA IS NOT GOOD. MANY OF THE MOROCCAN SOLDIERS DO NOT LIKE THE LENGTH OF TIME THEY ARE REQUIRED TO STAY, THE LATENESS OF PAY, BAD FOOD, LACK OF WATER, AND THEIR

INABILITY TO STRIKE BACK AT POLISARIO SAFE HAVENS INSIDE ALGERIA.

10. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, WE JUDGE THAT MOROCCO WILL BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH THE PRESENT, OR EVEN A SOMEWHAT HIGHER, LEVEL OF CASUALTIES FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD WITHOUT FEELING THE NECESSITY TO ATTACK ALGERIA. THE MOROCCANS ARE FULLY CONVINCED OF THE JUSTNESS OF THEIR CLAIMS TO THE SAHARA, AND ARMY UNITS GENERALLY ARE WILLING TO PAY A HEAVY PRICE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THIS AREA. TO EASE THE MORALE PROBLEM, THE GOVERNMENT HAS SENT A LARGE NUMBER OF REPLACEMENTS TO THE SOUTHERN ZONE TO PERMIT TROOP ROTATION. IN ADDITION, WE EXPECT THE MOROCCANS TO IMPROVE THEIR MILITARY SECURITY IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BY ABANDONING THEIR CURRENT STRATEGY OF STATIONING LARGE NUMBERS OF  
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TROOPS IN A FEW KEY PLACES IN FAVOR OF USING SMALLER, MORE MOBILE UNITS TRANSPORTED BY FRENCH-SUPPLIED HELICOPTERS TO SEEK OUT AND DESTROY ROVING POLISARIO GUERRILLAS.

11. MAURITANIA ASSERTS CONTROL. MAURITANIA HAS ENCOUNTERED RELATIVELY LITTLE OPPOSITION IN ABSORBING ITS PORTION OF THE SAHARA. LIKE RABAT, NOUAKCHOTT HAS SUPPLIED ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL TO FILL THE VACUUM LEFT BY THE DEPARTING SPANISH. WHEN PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN AUGUST, THE ELECTORAL PROCESS EXTENDED TO THE MAURITANIAN-CONTROLLED PORTION OF THE SAHARA, AND EIGHT SAHARAN REPRESENTATIVES NOW HOLD SEATS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THE OULD DADDAH REGIME VIEWS THE ELECTIONS AS AN EXPRESSION OF APPROVAL BY THE SAHARAN PEOPLE OF MAURITANIAN ANNEXATION.

12. THE LARGE, SPARSELY POPULATED, AND WEAKLY DEFENDED MAURITANIAN HOMELAND HAS EXPERIENCED OCCASIONAL ATTACKS BY POLISARIO BANDS, NOTABLY THE DEEP-PENETRATION STRIKE AGAINST NOUAKCHOTT IN JUNE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE POLISARIO HAS ATTEMPTED VERY FEW OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN SAHARA (WE KNOW OF ONLY ONE ATTACK THERE SINCE FEBRUARY) BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

--THE MAURITANIAN SAHARA IS MORE THAN 500 MILES FROM POLISARIO BASE CAMPS IN SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA.

--THE SOUTHERN SAHARANS, WHO HAVE CLOSE ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC TIES WITH THE MAURITANIANS, HAD LITTLE DIFFICULTY ACCOMMODATING THEMSELVES TO THEIR NEW RULERS.

--UNLIKE THE MOROCCANS, THE MAURITANIAN ARMY DID NOT ALIENATE THE LOCAL POPULATION BY A HEAVY USE OF FORCE WHEN IT OCCUPIED THE TERRITORY.

13. MAURITANIAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOUTHERN SAHARA IS AIDED BY MOROCCAN TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WHO MAINTAIN AND OPERATE SUCH FACILITIES AS ELECTRIC GENERATOR PLANTS AND AIRPORT CONTROL TOWERS. IN ADDITION, MOROCCAN  
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MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE STATIONED IN BIR MOGHREIN AND OTHER KEY LOCATIONS IN NORTHERN MAURITANIA TO PROVIDE ARMOR AND ARTILLERY SUPPORT. SOME MOROCCANS ALSO SERVE AS LIAISON OFFICERS WITH MAURITANIAN GENERAL HEADQUARTERS IN NOUAKCHOTT, AND A SMALL NUMBER OF MAURITANIAN SOLDIERS ARE RECEIVING TRAINING IN MOROCCO.

14. DESPITE FRICTIONS AT THE WORKING LEVEL AND RESIDUAL SUSPICION THAT THE MOROCCANS INTEND EVENTUALLY TO ABSORB ALL OF MAURITANIA, NOUAKCHOTT HAS BECOME CLOSELY ALLIED TO RABAT. WITH THE SOUTHERN SAHARA FULLY ABSORBED, MAURITANIA IS LESS LIKELY NOW THAN IT WAS SIX MONTHS AGO TO DROP ITS POLICY COORDINATION WITH MOROCCO IN FAVOR OF A SEPARATE DEAL WITH THE POLISARIO OR ALGERIA.

15. PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED MAURITANIAN SOLIDARITY WITH MOROCCO LOOK GOOD OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. OVER THE FOLLOWING YEAR OR TWO, HOWEVER, IF POLISARIO OPERATIONS BECOME FOCUSED AGAINST THE MOROCCANS AND MAURITANIA IS LEFT ALONE, THE OULD DADDAH REGIME MAY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE POLISARIO LEADERSHIP AND ALGIERS. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD GREATLY WEAKEN HASSAN'S MILITARY AND POLITICAL POSITION: IT WOULD FACILITATE THE POLISARIO'S MILITARY ACCESS TO THE SAHARA AND UNDERMINE MUCH OF THE POLITICAL SUPPORT OF A NUMBER OF AFRICAN AND OTHER STATES FOR PARTITION OF THE SAHARA. WITHIN MAURITANIA SUCH A MOVE WOULD MOLLIFY A SIGNIFICANT AND DISGRUNTLED PORTION OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION. THESE PERSONS HAVE OPENLY QUESTIONED THEIR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT TO AGREE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT

OF AN INDEPENDENT SAHARAN STATE INSTEAD OF DIVIDING THE SAHARA WITH MOROCCO, AN ACT THAT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A MILITARY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN NOUAKCHOTT AND THE POLISARIO.

16. THE POLISARIO KEEPS ON PUNCHING. POLISARIO UNITS HAVE OPERATED DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS OUT OF SAFE HAVENS IN NEIGHBORING ALGERIA, WHICH HAS LONG  
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BORDERS WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA. THE POLISARIO GUERRILLAS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE AMPLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FROM ALGERIA. MUCH OF THIS SUPPORT IS OF SOVIET ORIGIN, AND SOME OF THE WEAPONS COME FROM LIBYA. WITH PERHAPS AS MANY AS 45,000 POLITICIZED AND FRUSTRATED SAHARANS LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE TINDOUF AREA OF SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA, THE POLISARIO FRONT HAS A GOOD SOURCE TO MANPOWER FOR ITS FIGHTING FORCES.

17. BY EMPLOYING LAND ROVERS AND HIT-AND-RUN TACTICS, SMALL BANDS OF GUERRILLAS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OPERATE ALMOST DAILY AGAINST ELEMENTS OF THE 30,000 MOROCCAN TROOPS IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA AND SOUTHERN MOROCCO. WHILE LACKING SOPHISTICATED LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS, THE GUERRILLAS BENEFIT FROM EXCELLENT LOCAL INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND HIGH MORALE. THE POLISARIO INSURGENTS, NUMBERING AT LEAST 2,000-3,000 COMBATANTS, IN ADDITION TO SUPPORT PERSONNEL, APPEAR TO BE WELL EQUIPPED WITH SMALL ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND VEHICLES OF ALL MAKES, AND THEY ARE CONFIDENT OF THEIR ABILITY TO MOVE ABOUT UNCHALLENGED BY THE ENTRENCHED MOROCCAN FORCES. A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON TARFAYA IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO ON SEPTEMBER 11 SUGGESTS THAT THE POLISARIO MILITARY CAPABILITY IS IMPROVING.

18. NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE THEIR ABILITY TO OPERATE AGAINST MOROCCAN TARGETS, THE GUERRILLAS STILL DO NOT CONTROL ANY SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF SAHARAN TERRITORY. NOR HAS POLISARIO MILITARY ACTION BY ITSELF ACCOMPLISHED POLITICAL ENDS. THE EFFORT TO GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THE POLISARIO'S SELF-PROCLAIMED SAHARAN DEMOCRATIC ARAB REPUBLIC (SDAR), FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN NOTABLY UNSUCCESSFUL THUS FAR. ONLY 10 COUNTRIES--NINE IN AFRICA (INCLUDING ALGERIA BUT NOT LIBYA) AND NORTH KOREA--NOW RECOGNIZE THE SDAR.

19. THE DIPLOMATIC STRUGGLE. DESPITE THE PARTITION AGREEMENT SIGNED BY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA IN APRIL, THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE WESTERN SAHARA REMAINS IN CONTENTION. SPAIN, ALGERIA, AND THE UN HAVE NOT ACCEPTED RABAT'S ASSERTIONS THAT ADEQUATE  
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CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SAHARAN POPULATION ALREADY HAVE BEEN HELD AND THAT THE SAHARA QUESTION IS CLOSED.

--SPAIN MAINTAINS THAT THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (SPAIN, MOROCCO, AND MAURITANIA) OF NOVEMBER 1975 INVOLVED A TRANSFER ONLY OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY AND NOT

SOVEREIGNTY. PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, MADRID HAS ASSURED RABAT THAT IT WILL BE HELPFUL ON THE SAHARA ISSUE, AND THE SPANISH STAND TO BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY FROM COOPERATING WITH MOROCCO.

--MOROCCO ARGUES THAT THE FEBRUARY 26 MEETING AT WHICH THE SAHARAN JEMAA (TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY) VOTED TO RATIFY THE INTEGRATION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA SATISFIES THE POPULAR CONSULTATIONS CALLED FOR BY THE PRO-MOROCCAN RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE UNGA LAST YEAR.

--ALGIERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, POINTS TO THE PRO-ALGERIAN RESOLUTION ALSO PASSED BY THE UNGA LAST YEAR AND INSISTS ON SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH UN-SUPERVISED POPULAR CONSULTATIONS. THESE HAVE NOT BEEN HELD AND CANNOT BE HELD SO LONG AS HALF OF THE SAHARAN POPULATION REMAINS IN REFUGEE CAMPS OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY. BOUMEDIENE REJECTS MOROCCO'S CLAIM THAT THE JEMAA, AS A SURVIVAL FROM THE SPANISH REGIME, REPRESENTS THE SAHARANS. THUS, FOR ALGIERS, THE SAHARA QUESTION REMAINS VERY MUCH OPEN.

20. IN ADDITION TO ITS MATERIAL SUPPORT OF POLISARIO GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES, ALGERIA HAS SOUGHT TO KEEP THE SAHARA ISSUE ALIVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ARENA. MOROCCO'S COUNTER-STRATEGY CONSISTS OF LOBBYING EFFORTS AIMED AT KEEPING THE SAHARA QUESTION OFF THE AGENDA OF INTERNATIONAL FORUMS.

21. THE OAU SUMMIT. MOROCCO NARROWLY AVOIDED A DIPLOMATIC DISASTER AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN MAURITIUS IN JULY. AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING PRECEDING THE SUMMIT, ALGERIA SUCCEEDED IN GAINING THE SYMPATHY OF

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MOST DELEGATIONS FOR ITS SAHARA POSITION THROUGH HARD-SELL LOBBYING BY A 66-MEMBER DELEGATION, AN ENERGETIC PERFORMANCE BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA, AND HELP FROM LIBYA. WHEN A BENIN RESOLUTION BACKING THE POLISARIO WAS PASSED BY A 30-2 MARGIN, MOROCCO THREATENED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE OAU. FOLLOWING AN EXTENSIVE LOBBYING EFFORT BY PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, HOWEVER, A COMPROMISE SOLUTION WAS REACHED: THE OAU AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO HOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT TO DISCUSS THE WESTERN SAHARA.

22. THIS OUTCOME WAS A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY FOR ALGERIA, WHICH HAD SUCCEEDED IN REOPENING THE SAHARA ISSUE. FURTHERMORE, THE MEETING ENABLED THE POLISARIO FRONT TO EMERGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

AS A CREDIBLE INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION RATHER THAN AS A RAGTAG BAND OF ALGERIAN PUPPETS. ON THE OTHER HAND, NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT. MOROCCO IS LIKELY TO TRY A VARIETY OF DELAYING TACTICS; EVEN SOME ALGERIAN DIPLOMATS DOUBT THAT THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT WILL EVER TAKE PLACE.

23. THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE. JOLTED BY THE ALGERIAN PERFORMANCE AT THE OAU SUMMIT, THE MOROCCANS SENT A STRONG 50-MEMBER DELEGATION TO THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE (NAC) HELD IN COLOMBO IN AUGUST. RABAT'S STRATEGY THERE WAS TO ARGUE THAT REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (LIKE THE OAU AND THE ARAB LEAGUE) ARE THE MOST APPROPRIATE FORUMS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF "BILATERAL ISSUES". THE LANGUAGE ON THE SAHARA ISSUE WHICH EMERGED IN THE NAC POLITICAL DECLARATION, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DEBATE, WAS A PLATITUDINOUS COMPROMISE THAT SIMPLY NOTED WITH APPROVAL THE ACTION OF THE OAU SUMMIT IN CALLING FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT TO DEAL WITH THE SAHARA ISSUE.

24. THIS STATEMENT REPRESENTED A MOROCCAN DIPLOMATIC VICTORY BECAUSE IT DID NOT REFER EITHER TO SELF-DETERMINATION OR THE SAHARAN PEOPLE. THE TUNISIANS, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSIDERED THE LANGUAGE A FACE-SAVING DEVICE FOR BOUMEDIENE, WHO HAD TO ACCEPT AT COLOMBO  
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FAR LESS ON THE SAHARAN QUESTION THAN ALGIERS HAD WON AT THE OAU SUMMIT THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

25. THE UNGA. ALGERIA IS CERTAIN TO RAISE THE SAHARA ISSUE AT THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE UNGA, PROBABLY IN EARLY NOVEMBER. A PETITION HAS BEEN CIRCULATED IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE TO ALLOW A POLISARIO REPRESENTATIVE TO SPEAK, AND ALGIERS WILL ATTEMPT TO USE THIS PRESENTATION TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS POSITION. THE ANTICIPATED SCENARIO AT THE UNGA SEEMS LIKELY TO RESEMBLE THAT AT THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE. THE ALGERIANS PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GARNER ENOUGH SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF A FAVORABLE RESOLUTION BECAUSE A MAJORITY OF STATES ARE LIKELY TO AGREE TO GIVE THE SAHARA QUESTION BACK TO THE OAU.

26. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS THE LESS PROBABLE SCENARIO THAT WOULD HAVE THE UNGA PRODUCE TWO COMPETING SAHARA RESOLUTIONS--ONE PRO-MOROCCAN AND ONE PRO-ALGERIAN--AS WAS THE CASE LAST YEAR. IN THAT EVENT, THE PRO-MOROCCAN RESOLUTION PROBABLY WOULD, AT A MINIMUM, NOTE ONCE AGAIN THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT OF NOVEMBER 1975; AT A MAXIMUM, IT WOULD NOTE THE EXERCISE OF SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION AT THE FEBRUARY 26



MEETING OF THE JEMAA AND THE PARTITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA SIGNED IN APRIL. A PRO-ALGERIAN RESOLUTION, BY CONTRAST, WOULD CALL ONCE AGAIN FOR SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION UNDER UN SUPERVISION.

27. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE FOR ALGERIA, IN CONNECTION WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, TO INTRODUCE A RESOLUTION FOCUSING ON THE PLIGHT OF THE SAHARAN REFUGEES IN THE TINDOUF AREA. THIS RESOLUTION COULD ACCOMPANY EITHER OF THE TWO SCENARIOS MENTIONED ABOVE. SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD GIVE THE ALGERIANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE REFUGEE PROBLEM AS A MEANS OF RAISING THE ISSUE OF SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

28. WE EXPECT THE ALGERIANS TO PURSUE A FLEXIBLE SECRET

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STRATEGY AT THE UN. BASED ON THEIR PAST PERFORMANCE AT INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, THEY WILL HAVE SEVERAL FALL-BACK POSITIONS. IF THE ALGERIANS FIND THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE UN MOVING IN THEIR FAVOR, THEY WILL MAKE A BIG PUSH. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THEY SENSE THAT THE TIDE IS RUNNING AGAINST THEM, THE ALGERIANS PROBABLY

WILL SETTLE FOR A REAFFIRMATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION--AND THEN MAKE THEIR BIG PUSH IN THE NEXT OAU SUMMIT IN MID-1977.

29. MOROCCO HAS SENT A NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL EMISSARIES TO VARIOUS THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS TO EXPLAIN ITS POSITION ON THE SAHARA. SOME OF THESE STATES, SUCH AS YUGOSLAVIA, ARE NOW PERSUADED THAT THE MOROCCAN TAKEOVER IS A FAIT ACCOMPLI AND HAVE NO INTENTION OF BECOMING INVOLVED IN EFFORTS TO REVIVE THE ISSUE OR OF RECOGNIZING THE SDAR. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT, AT COLOMBO, ALGERIA HAD TO RELY INCREASINGLY FOR SUPPORT ON A NUMBER OF THE SMALLER, MORE RADICAL, AND/OR COMMUNIST STATES LIKE CUBA, VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA, AND NORTH KOREA. THAT THESE STATES ARE NON-AFRICAN AND NON-ARAB SHOULD BOLSTER MOROCCO'S ATTEMPTS AT THE UNGA TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS POSITION.

30. PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT: THE POTENTIAL FOR A SETTLEMENT HAS SCARCELY IMPROVED DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. NEITHER MOROCCO NOR ALGERIA HAS YET SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO BACK AWAY FROM ITS BASIC POSITION. WHILE THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT BOUMEDIENE HAS BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN A FACE-SAVING WAY OUT OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM, WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL STILL INSIST ON

SOME FORM OF SELF-DETERMINATION--WHICH THE MOROCCANS STRONGLY OPPOSE. ALTHOUGH BOUMEDIENE'S APPROACH TO THE SAHARA ISSUE DOES NOT ENJOY WIDESPREAD SUPPORT IN ALGERIA, WHERE MANY THINK IT IS AN UNNECESSARY DIVERSION OF ALGERIAN RESOURCES, WE BELIEVE THAT HIS PERSONAL COMMITMENT, BOTH PUBLIC AND IDEOLOGICAL, PRECLUDES ABANDONMENT OF THE POLISARIO CAUSE.

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31. AT THE SAME TIME, WE CONSIDER IT UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE MAJOR HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS. ON THE ALGERIAN SIDE:

--THE ARMED FORCES ARE NOT PREPARED TO LAUNCH A MAJOR ATTACK. THE ARMY, WHICH HAS BEEN USED PRIMARILY IN CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS FOR MANY YEARS, WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME TO ASSIMILATE NEWLY ACQUIRED SOVIET WEAPONRY.

--THE LEADERSHIP IS PREOCCUPIED WITH A CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM AND PRESIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AIMED AT LEGITIMIZING THE REGIME.

--AN UNPOPULAR WAR WITH MOROCCO COULD CREATE PROBLEMS FOR BOUMEDIENE AT HOME.

32. BOUMEDIENE'S STRATEGY, THEREFORE, PROBABLY IS TO WAIT FOR THE MOROCCANS TO ATTACK, IN ORDER TO BRAND THEM AS THE AGGRESSORS IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. BOUMEDIENE GREATLY PREFERS TO FIGHT A WAR BY PROXY THROUGH THE POLISARIO FRONT. WE ESTIMATE THAT THE ALGERIANS CAN PROBABLY SUSTAIN SUCH A WAR FOR A CONSIDERABLE TIME TO COME.

33. MOROCCO, FOR ITS PART, IS ALSO UNLIKELY TO INITIATE MAJOR HOSTILITIES.

--THE MOROCCAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, EMASCULATED BY HASAN FOLLOWING COUP ATTEMPTS IN 1970 AND 1971 IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF REBUILDING ITSELF AND ASSIMILATING FRENCH AND AMERICAN WEAPONRY. WE ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL NOT BE READY TO FIGHT A WAR WITH ALGERIA UNTIL MID-1977 AT THE EARLIEST.

--HASSAN REALIZES THAT A HUMILIATING MILITARY DEFEAT COULD COST HIM HIS THRONE.

--BOTH THE KING AND THE ARMY RECOGNIZE THAT ANY OVERT MILITARY MOVE INTO ALGERIA WOULD UNDERCUT THE INCREASING  
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SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING THAT MOROCCO HAS LABORIOUSLY GAINED IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS FROM THE MORE MODERATE NATIONS.

34. ALTHOUGH THE CASUALTIES INFLICTED BY POLISARIO OPERATIONS CONTINUE TO CAUSE CONSIDERABLE FRUSTRATION IN THE MOROCCAN ARMY, WE BELIEVE THAT HASSAN IS MORE LIKELY TO RESPOND BY SENDING INFILTRATORS INTO ALGERIAN TERRITORY THAN BY LAUNCHING A MAJOR ATTACK. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE MOROCCANS ARE CURRENTLY TRAINING AND-EQUIPPING THEIR-OWN GUERRILLA UNITS TO GIVE THE ALGERIANS A TASTE OF THEIR OWN-MEDICINE. THIS-MORE LIMITED RESPONSE IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE PLACE UNTIL AFTER THE CURRENT UNGA SESSION. EVEN THEN, MOROCCO WOULD WEIGH SUCH A MOVE

AGAINST THE POSSIBLE DAMAGE THAT IT MIGHT DO TO RABAT'S HITHERTO SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO ISOLATE THE POLISARIO POLITICALLY.

35. SOVIET POLICY ON THE SAHARA: THERE WAS SOME CONCERN EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT THE MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN CONFLICT COULD BECOME "INTERNATIONALIZED," THAT A POLARIZATION OF FORCES COULD OCCUR IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY A REGIONAL DISPUTE, AND THAT A PROXY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING. WE JUDGE NOW THAT THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE FOR THE MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN DISPUTE OVER THE SAHARA TO FOLLOW THIS COURSE, UNLESS MAJOR HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT BETWEEN THE TWO ANTAGONISTS--A POSSIBILITY THAT WE CURRENTLY CONSIDER REMOTE.

36. SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE SAHARA ISSUE CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF PUBLIC NEUTRALITY. MOSCOW CONSIDERS THE PROBLEM A REGIONAL DISPUTE WHOSE RESOLUTION IS BEST LEFT TO ARAB AND AFRICAN NATIONS, WITHOUT SUPER-POWER INVOLVEMENT. WHILE THE SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ALGERIA MILITARILY BECAUSE OF ITS USEFULNESS AS A COOPERATIVE, PROMINENT THIRD WORLD LEADER, WE DO NOT THINK THAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN FUELING OR PROVOKING A CONFLICT. IN ADDITION, WE ANTICIPATE THAT  
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THE DESIRE OF THE SOVIETS TO PRESERVE THEIR PRESENCE IN MOROCCO WILL CAUSE THEM TO LIMIT THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF ANY ALGERIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS.

37. PROSPECTS: THE LONGER THE MOROCCANS CAN TOLERATE POLISARIO GUERRILLA OPERATIONS WITHOUT ATTACKING

ALGERIAN TERRITORY, THE STRONGER THEIR CLAIM TO THE SAHARA BECOMES. EACH PASSING MONTH MAKES THE DE FACTO ANNEXATION OF THE DISPUTED TERRITORY HARDER FOR ALGERIA AND ITS THIRD WORLD SUPPORTERS IN THE UN TO REVERSE. IF HASSAN CAN CONTINUE TO AVOID AN EXCALATION FROM GUERRILLA TO CONVENTIONAL WARFARE, THE PROTAGONISTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO INCREASE THEIR PRESSURES ON THE US TO TAKE SIDES.

38. THE PRESENT MODERATE LEVEL OF POLISARIO OPERATIONS AFFORDS HASSAN TIME IN WHICH TO FINESSE A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM. ONE POSSIBLE MOROCCAN TACTIC WOULD BE A SIZABLE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN TO LURE BACK TO THE SAHARA A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN POLISARIO-RUN CAMPS IN SOUTHWEST ALGERIA. CONDITIONS IN THESE CAMPS ARE POOR, AND THE MOROCCANS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO BEAM RADIO BROADCASTS AT THE REFUGEES URGING THEM TO COME HOME. THE RETURN OF MOST OF THE REFUGEES WOULD CAUSE THE POLISARIO MANPOWER PROBLEMS BECAUSE SOME OF THE GUERRILLAS COULD BE EXPECTED TO LEAVE THEIR BASE CAMPS IN ALGERIA AND FOLLOW THEIR FAMILIES BACK TO THE SAHARA. IN ADDITION, SUCH "VOTING WITH THEIR FEET" COULD BE CONSTRUED BY THE MOROCCANS AS A FORM OF SELF-DETERMINATION.

39. LURING THE REFUGEES BACK HOME, HOWEVER, WILL NOT BE EASY FOR MOROCCO. THE REGUIBAT TRIBESMEN, WHO PROVIDE THE DOMINANT MILITARY AND POLITICAL FORCE IN THE POLISARIO, ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO MOROCCAN DOMINATION. IN ADDITION TO A LONG HISTORY OF REGUIBAT-MOROCCAN HOSTILITY, THE REGUIBAT ARE DEEPLY EMBITTERED OVER THE MISTREATMENT OF TRIBAL MEMBERS DURING MOROCCO'S TAKEOVER OF THE NORTHERN SAHARA.

40. THE CURRENT UNGA SESSION PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY  
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FOR THE FORCES OF MODERATION--SUCH AS FRANCE, TUNISIA, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA--TO PERSUADE THE MOROCCANS NOT TO PUSH FOR A RESOLUTION THAT SATISFIES ALL OF THEIR REQUIREMENTS. MOROCCO MAY BE PLANNING TO PUSH FOR A RESOLUTION NAMING ALGERIA AS AN AGGRESSOR AGAINST NEIGHBORING STATES.

41. THE MOROCCANS COULD BE ENCOURAGED INSTEAD TO SETTLE FOR A MODERATE RESOLUTION, SIMILAR TO THAT ISSUED BY THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE, WHICH OFFERS BOTH SIDES A WAY OF DELAYING A CONFRONTATION. IF THE MOROCCANS COULD GARNER MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR SUCH A RESOLUTION, IT MIGHT DEPRIVE THE ALGERIANS OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO CAST THE ISSUE IN TERMS OF SELF-DETERMINATION (WHICH NORMALLY ELICITS STRONG SUPPORT IN THE UNGA) AND PROVIDE MOROCCO'S

FRIENDS A WATOUT OF HAVING TO LINE UP-WITH MOROCCO  
AGAINST THE MAJORITY.

42. THE TIMING OF THIS ISSUE IN THE UN--EARLY NOVEMBER--  
AFFORDS MODERATE FORCES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STRAIGHT  
TALK AND INTENSIVE POLITICKING WITH THE MOROCCANS  
AND FOR THE ARAB STATES, PARTICULARLY EGYPT AND  
SAUDI ARABIA, TO DISCOURAGE THE ALGERIAN PREDILECTION  
FOR A SHOWDOWN ON THE ISSUE OF SELF-DETERMINATION.  
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STADIS////////////////////////////////////  
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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 273978 ACTION ALGIERS, NOUAKCHOTT, RABAT,  
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C O R R E C T E D COPY (LINE ONE PARA 9 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SS, AG, MO, MR, SP, UR

SUBJECT: INR ASSESSMENT OF WESTERN SAHARA ISSUE

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN INR ASSESSMENT OF THE  
WESTERN SAHARA SITUATION. WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. OVERVIEW: THE SAHARA QUESTION CONTINUES TO BE THE  
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FOCUS OF DEEP-SEATED ANTAGONISM BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. WHILE THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE AVOIDED A DIRECT MILITARY CONFLICT, THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WESTERN SAHARA HAS BEEN WAGED ON THREE FRONTS:

--A MODERATE LEVEL OF MILITARY HOSTILITIES BETWEEN POLISARIO GUERRILLAS AND MOROCCAN REGULAR UNITS;

--A FIERCE DIPLOMATIC COMPETITION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS; AND

--STEADY PROGRESS BY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD ON THE AREA.

3. DESPITE THIS ACTIVITY, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SAHARAN SITUATION OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. INSTEAD, WE FORESEE THESE DEVELOPMENTS:

--THE POLISARIO FRONT WILL CONTINUE ITS HIT-AND-RUN RAIDS, BUT AT A LEVEL TOLERABLE TO MOROCCO.

--MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WILL CONTINUE TO CONTROL THE MAIN POPULATION CENTERS AND TO ADMINISTER THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF THE SAHARA.

--NEITHER MOROCCO NOR ALGERIA SHOWS ANY WILLINGNESS TO MAKE THE COMPROMISES NEEDED FOR A SETTLEMENT, BUT NEITHER WILL TRY TO WIDEN THE CONFLICT.

--ALGERIA WILL SEEK TO KEEP THE ISSUE OF SELF-DETERMINATION ALIVE IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, BUT THE WIDESPREAD PERCEPTION IN THE THIRD WORLD THAT MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN CONTROL IS AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT WILL CONTINUE TO LIMIT SUPPORT FOR ALGERIA'S POSITION LARGELY TO A NUMBER OF RADICAL AND COMMUNIST STATES.

--THE SOVIETS, SEEKING TO PRESERVE THEIR PRESENCE IN MOROCCO, WILL REMAIN PUBLICLY NEUTRAL, DESPITE THEIR CLOSER TIES TO ALGERIA.

4. DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE SAHARA: MOROCCO AND  
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MAURITANIA HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRES DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS IN DIVIDING UP THE SAHARA. ON APRIL 14, IN

AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH FORMAL SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE WESTERN SAHARA, RABAT AND NOUAKCHOTT ANNOUNCED THAT THEY HAD AGREED TO PARTITION THE DISPUTED TERRITORY: MOROCCO ACQUIRED THE NORTHERN TWO-THIRDS OF THE SAHARA, O CONTAINING THE CAPITAL OF EL AAIUN AND THE RICH PHOSPHATE DEPOSITS AT BU CRAA; MAURITANIA GOT THE SOUTHERN THIRD, INCLUDING RICH MARINE RESOURCES, THE UNEXPLOITED IRON ORE AT AGRACHA, AND THE EXCELLENT PORT OF DAKHLA.

5. MOROCCAN ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION. IN AN EFFORT TO INTEGRATE THE NORTHERN SAHARA INTO THE MOROCCAN "MOTHERLAND," RABAT HAS SENT PERSONNEL FROM SEVERAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES TO WORK IN THE THREE NEWLY ACQUIRED PROVINCES:

--MOROCCAN CIVILIAN GOVERNORS AND LESSER FUNCTIONARIES ARE NOW SERVING IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITALS OF EL AAIUM, SEMARA, AND BOUJADOR, WHILE PASHAS AND CAIDS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO SMALLER CITIES AND TOWNS.

--THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS ESTABLISHED THREE REGIONAL OFFICES AND STAFFED THEM WITH TECHNICAL PERSONNEL.

--POSTAL, TELEPHONE, AND AIR LINKS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

6. IN ADDITION, KING HASSAN'S GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED A BOND DRIVE DURING THE SUMMER TO RAISE \$230 MILLION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE SAHARAN PROVINCES OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PHOSPHATES AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

7. IN THE COMING MONTHS, RABAT WILL ATTEMPT TO CONSOLIDATE POPULAR SUPPORT BY ALLOWING THE SAHARANS TO VOTE IN THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS LATER THIS FALL.

8. HASSAN'S ARMY UNDER ATTACK. THE MOROCCANS HAVE HAD ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS IN ESTABLISHING MILITARY SECURITY IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA. ASIDE FROM A FEW LARGE-SCALE  
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SWEEPING OPERATIONS OF MARGINAL EFFECTIVENESS, MOROCCAN FORCES HAVE CONCENTRATED ON MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE PRINCIPAL POPULATION CENTERS AND THE MAJOR OASES. AS A RESULT OF THIS TACTIC, POLISARIO GUERRILLAS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MINE ROADS AND CARRY OUT NUMEROUS SMALL AMBUSHES AND MORTAR ATTACKS IN BOTH THE NORTHERN SAHARA AND SOUTHERN MOROCCO. THE GUERRILLAS ARE NOW ABLE TO MOVE ABOUT FAR MORE FREELY THAN WAS THE CASE A FEW MONTHS AGO.

9. POLISARIO HIT-AND-RUN OPERATIONS HAVE KILLED 700-800 MOROCCAN SOLDIERS SINCE LAST NOVEMBER AND HAVE WOUNDED

SEVERAL TIMES THAT NUMBER. MORALE AMONG THE UNITS IN THE SAHARA IS NOT GOOD. MANY OF THE MORROCAN SOLDIERS DO NOT LIKE THE LENGTH OF TIME THEY ARE REQUIRED TO STAY, THE LATENESS OF PAY, BAD FOOD, LACK OF WATER, AND THEIR

INABILITY TO STRIKE BACK AT POLISARIO SAFE HAVENS INSIDE ALGERIA.

10. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, WE JUDGE THAT MOROCCO WILL BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH THE PRESENT, OR EVEN A SOMEWHAT HIGHER, LEVEL OF CASUALTIES FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD WITHOUT FEELING THE NECESSITY TO ATTACK ALGERIA. THE MOROCCANS ARE FULLY CONVINCED OF THE JUSTNESS OF THEIR CLAIMS TO THE SAHARA, AND ARMY UNITS GENERALLY ARE WILLING TO PAY A HEAVY PRICE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THIS AREA. TO EASE THE MORALE PROBLEM, THE GOVERNMENT HAS SENT A LARGE NUMBER OF REPLACEMENTS TO THE SOUTHERN ZONE TO PERMIT TROOP ROTATION. IN ADDITION, WE EXPECT THE MOROCCANS TO IMPROVE THEIR MILITARY SECURITY IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BY ABANDONING THEIR CURRENT STRATEGY OF STATIONING LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS IN A FEW KEY PLACES IN FAVOR OF USING SMALLER, MORE MOBILE UNITS TRANSPORTED BY FRENCH-SUPPLIED HELICOPTERS TO SEEK OUT AND DESTROY ROVING POLISARIO GUERRILLAS.

11. MAURITANIA ASSERTS CONTROL. MAURITANIA HAS ENCOUNTERED RELATIVELY LITTLE OPPOSITION IN ABSORBING ITS PORTION OF THE SAHARA. LIKE RABAT, NOUAKCHOTT HAS  
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SUPPLIED ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL TO FILL THE VACUUM LEFT BY THE DEPARTING SPANISH. WHEN PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN AUGUST, THE ELECTORAL PROCESS EXTENDED TO THE MAURITANIAN-CONTROLLED PORTION OF THE SAHARA, AND EIGHT SAHARAN REPRESENTATIVES NOW HOLD SEATS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THE OULD DADDAH REGIME VIEWS THE ELECTIONS AS AN EXPRESSION OF APPROVAL BY THE SAHARAN PEOPLE OF MAURITANIAN ANNEXATION.

12. THE LARGE, SPARSELY POPULATED, AND WEAKLY DEFENDED MAURITANIAN HOMELAND HAS EXPERIENCED OCCASIONAL ATTACKS BY POLISARIO BANDS, NOTABLY THE DEEP-PENETRATION STRIKE AGAINST NOUAKCHOTT IN JUNE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE POLISARIO HAS ATTEMPTED VERY FEW OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN SAHARA (WE KNOW OF ONLY ONE ATTACK THERE SINCE FEBRUARY) BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

--THE MAURITANIAN SAHARA IS MORE THAN 500 MILES FROM POLISARIO BASE CAMPS IN SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA.

--THE SOUTHERN SAHARANS, WHO HAVE CLOSE ETHNIC AND



LINGUISTIC TIES WITH THE MAURITANIANS, HAD LITTLE DIFFICULTY ACCOMMODATING THEMSELVES TO THEIR NEW RULERS.

--UNLIKE THE MOROCCANS, THE MAURITANIAN ARMY DID NOT ALIENATE THE LOCAL POPULATION BY A HEAVY USE OF FORCE WHEN IT OCCUPIED THE TERRITORY.

13. MAURITANIAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOUTHERN SAHARA IS AIDED BY MOROCCAN TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WHO MAINTAIN AND OPERATE SUCH FACILITIES AS ELECTRIC GENERATOR PLANTS AND AIRPORT CONTROL TOWERS. IN ADDITION, MOROCCAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE STATIONED IN BIR MOGHREIN AND OTHER KEY LOCATIONS IN NORTHERN MAURITANIA TO PROVIDE ARMOR AND ARTILLERY SUPPORT. SOME MOROCCANS ALSO SERVE AS LIAISON OFFICERS WITH MAURITANIAN GENERAL HEADQUARTERS IN NOUAKCHOTT, AND A SMALL NUMBER OF MAURITANIAN SOLDIERS ARE RECEIVING TRAINING IN MOROCCO.

14. DESPITE FRICTIONS AT THE WORKING LEVEL AND  
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RESIDUAL SUSPICION THAT THE MOROCCANS INTEND EVENTUALLY TO ABSORB ALL OF MAURITANIA, NOUAKCHOTT HAS BECOME CLOSELY ALLIED TO RABAT. WITH THE SOUTHERN SAHARA FULLY ABSORBED, MAURITANIA IS LESS LIKELY NOW THAN IT WAS SIX MONTHS AGO TO DROP ITS POLICY COORDINATION WITH MOROCCO IN FAVOR OF A SEPARATE DEAL WITH THE POLISARIO OR ALGERIA.

15. PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED MAURITANIAN SOLIDARITY WITH MOROCCO LOOK GOOD OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. OVER THE FOLLOWING YEAR OR TWO, HOWEVER, IF POLISARIO OPERATIONS BECOME FOCUSED AGAINST THE MOROCCANS AND MAURITANIA IS LEFT ALONE, THE OULD DADDAH REGIME MAY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE POLISARIO LEADERSHIP AND ALGIERS. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD GREATLY WEAKEN HASSAN'S MILITARY AND POLITICAL POSITION: IT WOULD FACILITATE THE POLISARIO'S MILITARY ACCESS TO THE SAHARA AND UNDERMINE MUCH OF THE POLITICAL SUPPORT OF A NUMBER OF AFRICAN AND OTHER STATES FOR PARTITION OF THE SAHARA. WITHIN MAURITANIA SUCH A MOVE WOULD MOLLIFY A SIGNIFICANT AND DISGRUNTLED PORTION OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION. THESE PERSONS HAVE OPENLY QUESTIONED THEIR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT TO AGREE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT

OF AN INDEPENDENT SAHARAN STATE INSTEAD OF DIVIDING THE SAHARA WITH MOROCCO, AN ACT THAT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A MILITARY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN NOUAKCHOTT AND THE POLISARIO.

16. THE POLISARIO KEEPS ON PUNCHING. POLISARIO UNITS HAVE OPERATED DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS OUT OF SAFE HAVENS IN NEIGHBORING ALGERIA, WHICH HAS LONG BORDERS WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA. THE POLISARIO GUERRILLAS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE AMPLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FROM ALGERIA. MUCH OF THIS SUPPORT IS OF SOVIET ORIGIN, AND SOME OF THE WEAPONS COME FROM LIBYA. WITH PERHAPS AS MANY AS 45,000 POLITICIZED AND FRUSTRATED SAHARANS LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE TINDOUF AREA OF SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA, THE POLISARIO FRONT HAS A GOOD SOURCE TO MANPOWER FOR ITS FIGHTING FORCES.

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17. BY EMPLOYING LAND ROVERS AND HIT-AND-RUN TACTICS, SMALL BANDS OF GUERRILLAS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OPERATE ALMOST DAILY AGAINST ELEMENTS OF THE 30,000 MOROCCAN TROOPS IN THE NORTHERN SAHARA AND SOUTHERN MOROCCO. WHILE LACKING SOPHISTICATED LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS, THE GUERRILLAS BENEFIT FROM EXCELLENT LOCAL INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND HIGH MORALE. THE POLISARIO INSURGENTS, NUMBERING AT LEAST 2,000-3,000 COMBATANTS, IN ADDITION TO SUPPORT PERSONNEL, APPEAR TO BE WELL EQUIPPED WITH SMALL ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND VEHICLES OF ALL MAKES, AND THEY ARE CONFIDENT OF THEIR ABILITY TO MOVE ABOUT UNCHALLENGED BY THE ENTRENCHED MOROCCAN FORCES. A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON TARFAYA IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO ON SEPTEMBER 11 SUGGESTS THAT THE POLISARIO MILITARY CAPABILITY IS IMPROVING.

18. NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE THEIR ABILITY TO OPERATE AGAINST MOROCCAN TARGETS, THE GUERRILLAS STILL DO NOT CONTROL ANY SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF SAHARAN TERRITORY. NOR HAS POLISARIO MILITARY ACTION BY ITSELF ACCOMPLISHED POLITICAL ENDS. THE EFFORT TO GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THE POLISARIO'S SELF-PROCLAIMED SAHARAN DEMOCRATIC ARAB REPUBLIC (SDAR), FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN NOTABLY UNSUCCESSFUL THUS FAR. ONLY 10 COUNTRIES--NINE IN AFRICA (INCLUDING ALGERIA BUT NOT LIBYA) AND NORTH KOREA--NOW RECOGNIZE THE SDAR.

19. THE DIPLOMATIC STRUGGLE. DESPITE THE PARTITION AGREEMENT SIGNED BY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA IN APRIL, THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE WESTERN SAHARA REMAINS IN CONTENTION. SPAIN, ALGERIA, AND THE UN HAVE NOT ACCEPTED RABAT'S ASSERTIONS THAT ADEQUATE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SAHARAN POPULATION ALREADY HAVE BEEN HELD AND THAT THE SAHARA QUESTION IS CLOSED.

--SPAIN MAINTAINS THAT THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (SPAIN, MOROCCO, AND MAURITANIA) OF NOVEMBER 1975 INVOLVED A TRANSFER ONLY OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY AND NOT SOVEREIGNTY. PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, MADRID HAS ASSURED

RABAT THAT IT WILL BE HELPFUL ON THE SAHARA ISSUE,  
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AND THE SPANISH STAND TO BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY FROM  
COOPERATING WITH MOROCCO.

--MOROCCO ARGUES THAT THE FEBRUARY 26 MEETING AT WHICH  
THE SAHARAN JEMAA (TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY) VOTED TO  
RATIFY THE INTEGRATION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA WITH  
MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA SATISFIES THE POPULAR CONSUL-  
TATIONS CALLED FOR BY THE PRO-MOROCCAN RESOLUTION  
PASSED BY THE UNGA LAST YEAR.

--ALGIERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, POINTS TO THE PRO-  
ALGERIAN RESOLUTION ALSO PASSED BY THE UNGA LAST YEAR  
AND INSISTS ON SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH  
UN-SUPERVISED POPULAR CONSULTATIONS. THESE HAVE  
NOT BEEN HELD AND CANNOT BE HELD SO LONG AS HALF OF  
THE SAHARAN POPULATION REMAINS IN REFUGEE CAMPS  
OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY. BOUMEDIENE REJECTS MOROCCO'S  
CLAIM THAT THE JEMAA, AS A SURVIVAL FROM THE SPANISH  
REGIME, REPRESENTS THE SAHARANS. THUS, FOR ALGIERS,  
THE SAHARA QUESTION REMAINS VERY MUCH OPEN.

20. IN ADDITION TO ITS MATERIAL SUPPORT OF POLISARIO  
GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES, ALGERIA HAS SOUGHT TO KEEP THE  
SAHARA ISSUE ALIVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL  
ARENA. MOROCCO'S COUNTER-STRATEGY CONSISTS OF  
LOBBYING EFFORTS AIMED AT KEEPING THE SAHARA QUESTION  
OFF THE AGENDA OF INTERNATIONAL FORUMS.

21. THE OAU SUMMIT. MOROCCO NARROWLY AVOIDED A  
DIPLOMATIC DISASTER AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN MAURITIUS IN  
JULY. AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING PRECEDING THE  
SUMMIT, ALGERIA SUCCEEDED IN GAINING THE SYMPATHY OF

MOST DELEGATIONS FOR ITS SAHARA POSITION THROUGH HARD-  
SELL LOBBYING BY A 66-MEMBER DELEGATION, AN ENERGETIC  
PERFORMANCE BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA, AND HELP  
FROM LIBYA. WHEN A BENIN RESOLUTION BACKING THE  
POLISARIO WAS PASSED BY A 30-2 MARGIN, MOROCCO THREATENED  
TO WITHDRAW FROM THE OAU. FOLLOWING AN EXTENSIVE  
LOBBYING EFFORT BY PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, HOWEVER,  
A COMPROMISE SOLUTION WAS REACHED: THE OAU AGREED  
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IN PRINCIPLE TO HOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT TO  
DISCUSS THE WESTERN SAHARA.

22. THIS OUTCOME WAS A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY FOR

ALGERIA, WHICH HAD SUCCEEDED IN REOPENING THE SAHARA ISSUE. FURTHERMORE, THE MEETING ENABLED THE POLISARIO FRONT TO EMERGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE AS A CREDIBLE INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION RATHER THAN AS A RAGTAG BAND OF ALGERIAN PUPPETS. ON THE OTHER HAND, NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT. MOROCCO IS LIKELY TO TRY A VARIETY OF DELAYING TACTICS; EVEN SOME ALGERIAN DIPLOMATS DOUBT THAT THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT WILL EVER TAKE PLACE.

23. THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE. JOLTED BY THE ALGERIAN PERFORMANCE AT THE OAU SUMMIT, THE MOROCCANS SENT A STRONG 50-MEMBER DELEGATION TO THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE (NAC) HELD IN COLOMBO IN AUGUST. RABAT'S STRATEGY THERE WAS TO ARGUE THAT REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (LIKE THE OAU AND THE ARAB LEAGUE) ARE THE MOST APPROPRIATE FORUMS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF "BILATERAL ISSUES". THE LANGUAGE ON THE SAHARA ISSUE WHICH EMERGED IN THE NAC POLITICAL DECLARATION, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DEBATE, WAS A PLATITUDINOUS COMPROMISE THAT SIMPLY NOTED WITH APPROVAL THE ACTION OF THE OAU SUMMIT IN CALLING FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT TO DEAL WITH THE SAHARA ISSUE.

24. THIS STATEMENT REPRESENTED A MOROCCAN DIPLOMATIC VICTORY BECAUSE IT DID NOT REFER EITHER TO SELF-DETERMINATION OR THE SAHARAN PEOPLE. THE TUNISIANS, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSIDERED THE LANGUAGE A FACE-SAVING DEVICE FOR BOUMEDIENE, WHO HAD TO ACCEPT AT COLOMBO FAR LESS ON THE SAHARAN QUESTION THAN ALGIERS HAD WON AT THE OAU SUMMIT THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

25. THE UNGA. ALGERIA IS CERTAIN TO RAISE THE SAHARA ISSUE AT THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE UNGA, PROBABLY IN EARLY NOVEMBER. A PETITION HAS BEEN CIRCULATED IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE TO ALLOW A POLISARIO REPRESENTATIVE TO SPEAK, AND ALGIERS WILL ATTEMPT TO USE THIS  
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PRESENTATION TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS POSITION. THE ANTICIPATED SCENARIO AT THE UNGA SEEMS LIKELY TO RESEMBLE THAT AT THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE. THE ALGERIANS PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GARNER ENOUGH SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF A FAVORABLE RESOLUTION BECAUSE A MAJORITY OF STATES ARE LIKELY TO AGREE TO GIVE THE SAHARA QUESTION BACK TO THE OAU.

26. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS THE LESS PROBABLE SCENARIO THAT WOULD HAVE THE UNGA PRODUCE TWO COMPETING SAHARA RESOLUTIONS--ONE PRO-MOROCCAN AND ONE PRO-ALGERIAN--AS WAS THE CASE LAST YEAR. IN THAT EVENT, THE PRO-MOROCCAN RESOLUTION PROBABLY WOULD, AT

A MINIMUM, NOTE ONCE AGAIN THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT OF NOVEMBER 1975; AT A MAXIMUM, IT WOULD NOTE THE EXERCISE OF SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION AT THE FEBRUARY 26 MEETING OF THE JEMAA AND THE PARTITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA SIGNED IN APRIL. A PRO-ALGERIAN RESOLUTION, BY CONTRAST, WOULD CALL ONCE AGAIN FOR SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION UNDER UN SUPERVISION.

27. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE FOR ALGERIA, IN CONNECTION WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, TO INTRODUCE A RESOLUTION FOCUSSED ON THE PLIGHT OF THE SAHARAN REFUGEES IN THE TINDOUF AREA. THIS RESOLUTION COULD ACCOMPANY EITHER OF THE TWO SCENARIOS MENTIONED ABOVE. SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD GIVE THE ALGERIANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE REFUGEE PROBLEM AS A MEANS OF RAISING THE ISSUE OF SAHARAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

28. WE EXPECT THE ALGERIANS TO PURSUE A FLEXIBLE STRATEGY AT THE UN. BASED ON THEIR PAST PERFORMANCE AT INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, THEY WILL HAVE SEVERAL FALL-BACK POSITIONS. IF THE ALGERIANS FIND THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE UN MOVING IN THEIR FAVOR, THEY WILL MAKE A BIG PUSH. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THEY SENSE THAT THE TIDE IS RUNNING AGAINST THEM, THE ALGERIANS PROBABLY

WILL SETTLE FOR A REAFFIRMATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF  
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SELF-DETERMINATION--AND THEN MAKE THEIR BIG PUSH IN THE NEXT OAU SUMMIT IN MID-1977.

29. MOROCCO HAS SENT A NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL EMISSARIES TO VARIOUS THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS TO EXPLAIN ITS POSITION ON THE SAHARA. SOME OF THESE STATES, SUCH AS YUGOSLAVIA, ARE NOW PERSUADED THAT THE MOROCCAN TAKEOVER IS A FAIT ACCOMPLI AND HAVE NO INTENTION OF BECOMING INVOLVED IN EFFORTS TO REVIVE THE ISSUE OR OF RECOGNIZING THE SDAR. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT, AT COLOMBO, ALGERIA HAD TO RELY INCREASINGLY FOR SUPPORT ON A NUMBER OF THE SMALLER, MORE RADICAL, AND/OR COMMUNIST STATES LIKE CUBA, VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA, AND NORTH KOREA. THAT THESE STATES ARE NON-AFRICAN AND NON-ARAB SHOULD BOLSTER MOROCCO'S ATTEMPTS AT THE UNGA TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS POSITION.

30. PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT: THE POTENTIAL FOR A SETTLEMENT HAS SCARCELY IMPROVED DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. NEITHER MOROCCO NOR ALGERIA HAS YET SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO BACK AWAY FROM ITS BASIC POSITION.

WHILE THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT BOUMEDIENE HAS BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN A FACE-SAVING WAY OUT OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM, WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL STILL INSIST ON SOME FORM OF SELF-DETERMINATION--WHICH THE MOROCCANS STRONGLY OPPOSE. ALTHOUGH BOUMEDIENE'S APPROACH TO THE SAHARA ISSUE DOES NOT ENJOY WIDESPREAD SUPPORT IN ALGERIA, WHERE MANY THINK IT IS AN UNNECESSARY DIVERSION OF ALGERIAN RESOURCES, WE BELIEVE THAT HIS PERSONAL COMMITMENT, BOTH PUBLIC AND IDEOLOGICAL, PRECLUDES ABANDONMENT OF THE POLISARIO CAUSE.

31. AT THE SAME TIME, WE CONSIDER IT UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE MAJOR HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS. ON THE ALGERIAN SIDE:

--THE ARMED FORCES ARE NOT PREPARED TO LAUNCH A MAJOR ATTACK. THE ARMY, WHICH HAS BEEN USED PRIMARILY IN CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS FOR MANY YEARS, WILL REQUIRE  
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CONSIDERABLE TIME TO ASSIMILATE NEWLY ACQUIRED SOVIET WEAPONRY.

--THE LEADERSHIP IS PREOCCUPIED WITH A CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM AND PRESIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AIMED AT LEGITIMIZING THE REGIME.

--AN UNPOPULAR WAR WITH MOROCCO COULD CREATE PROBLEMS FOR BOUMEDIENE AT HOME.

32. BOUMEDIENE'S STRATEGY, THEREFORE, PROBABLY IS TO WAIT FOR THE MOROCCANS TO ATTACK, IN ORDER TO BRAND THEM AS THE AGGRESSORS IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. BOUMEDIENE GREATLY PREFERS TO FIGHT A WAR BY PROXY THROUGH THE POLISARIO FRONT. WE ESTIMATE THAT THE ALGERIANS CAN PROBABLY SUSTAIN SUCH A WAR FOR A CONSIDERABLE TIME TO COME.

33. MOROCCO, FOR ITS PART, IS ALSO UNLIKELY TO INITIATE MAJOR HOSTILITIES.

--THE MOROCCAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, EMASCULATED BY HASAN FOLLOWING COUP ATTEMPTS IN 1970 AND 1971 IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF REBUILDING ITSELF AND ASSIMILATING FRENCH AND AMERICAN WEAPONRY. WE ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL NOT BE READY TO FIGHT A WAR WITH ALGERIA UNTIL MID-1977 AT THE EARLIEST.

--HASSAN REALIZES THAT A HUMILIATING MILITARY DEFEAT COULD COST HIM HIS THRONE.

--BOTH THE KING AND THE ARMY RECOGNIZE THAT ANY OVERT MILITARY MOVE INTO ALGERIA WOULD UNDERCUT THE INCREASING SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING THAT MOROCCO HAS LABORIOUSLY GAINED IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS FROM THE MORE MODERATE NATIONS.

34. ALTHOUGH THE CASUALTIES ;NFLECTED BY POLISARIO OPERATIONS CONTINUE TO CAUSE CONSIDERABLE FRUSTRATION IN THE MOROCCAN ARMY, WE BELIEVE THAT HASSAN IS MORE LIKELY TO RESPOND BY SENDING INFILTRATORS INTO ALGERIAN  
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TE ITORY THAN BY LAUNCHING A MAJOR ATTACK. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE MOROCCANS ARE CURRENTLY TRAINING AND-EQUIPPING THEIR-OWN GUERRILLA UNITS TO GIVE THE ALGERIANS A TASTE OF THE R OWN-MEDICINE. THI -MORE LIMITED RESPONSE IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE PLACE UNTIL AFTER THE CURRENT UNGA SESSION. EVEN THEN, MOROCCO WOULD WEIGH SUCH A MOVE

AGAINST THE POSSIBLE DAMAGE THAT IT MIGHT DO TO RABAT'S HITHERTO SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO ISOLATE THE POLISARIO POLITICALLY.

35. SOVIET POLICY ON THE SAHARA: THERE WAS SOME CONCERN EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT THE MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN CONFLICT COULD BECOME "INTERNATIONALIZED," THAT A POLARIZATION OF FORCES COULD OCCUR IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY A REGIONAL DISPUTE, AND THAT A PROXY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING. WE JUDGE NOW THAT THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE FOR THE MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN DISPUTE OVER THE SAHARA TO FOLLOW THIS COURSE, UNLESS MAJOR HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT BETWEEN THE TWO ANTAGONISTS--A POSSIBILITY THAT WE CURRENTLY CONSIDER REMOTE.

36. SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE SAHARA ISSUE CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF PUBLIC NEUTRALITY. MOSCOW CONSIDERS THE PROBLEM A REGIONAL DISPUTE WHOSE RESOLUTION IS BEST LEFT TO ARAB AND AFRICAN NATIONS, WITHOUT SUPER-POWER INVOLVEMENT. WHILE THE SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ALGERIA MILITARILY BECAUSE OF ITS USEFULNESS AS A COOPERATIVE, PROMINENT THIRD WORLD LEADER, WE DO NOT THINK THAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN FUELING OR PROVOKING A CONFLICT. IN ADDITION, WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE DESIRE OF THE SOVIETS TO PRESERVE THEIR PRESENCE IN MOROCCO WILL CAUSE THEM TO LIMIT THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF ANY ALGERIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS.

37. PROSPECTS: THE LONGER THE MOROCCANS CAN TOLERATE POLISARIO GUERRILLA OPERATIONS WITHOUT ATTACKING ALGERIAN TERRITORY, THE STRONGER THEIR CLAIM TO THE

SAHARA BECOMES. EACH PASSING MONTH MAKES THE DE FACTO  
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ANNEXATION OF THE DISPUTED TERRITORY HARDER FOR ALGERIA  
AND ITS THIRD WORLD SUPPORTERS IN THE UN TO REVERSE.  
IF HASSAN CAN CONTINUE TO AVOID AN EXCALATION FROM GUER-  
RILLA TO CONVENTIONAL WARFARE, THE PROTAGONISTS ARE NOT  
LIKELY TO INCREASE THEIR PRESSURES ON THE US TO TAKE  
SIDES.

38. THE PRESENT MODERATE LEVEL OF POLISARIO OPERATIONS  
AFFORDS HASSAN TIME IN WHICH TO FINESSE A NEGOTIATED  
SOLUTION OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM. ONE POSSIBLE MOROCCAN  
TACTIC WOULD BE A SIZABLE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN TO  
LURE BACK TO THE SAHARA A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES  
IN POLISARIO-RUN CAMPS IN SOUTHWEST ALGERIA. CONDITIONS  
IN THESE CAMPS ARE POOR, AND THE MOROCCANS HAVE ALREADY  
BEGUN TO BEAM RADIO BROADCASTS AT THE REFUGEES URGING  
THEM TO COME HOME. THE RETURN OF MOST OF THE REFUGEES  
WOULD CAUSE THE POLISARIO MANPOWER PROBLEMS BECAUSE SOME OF  
THE GUERRILLAS COULD BE EXPECTED TO LEAVE THEIR BASE  
CAMPS IN ALGERIA AND FOLLOW THEIR FAMILIES BACK TO THE  
SAHARA. IN ADDITION, SUCH "VOTING WITH THEIR FEET"  
COULD BE CONSTRUED BY THE MOROCCANS AS A FORM OF SELF-  
DETERMINATION.

39. LURING THE REFUGEES BACK HOME, HOWEVER, WILL NOT  
BE EASY FOR MOROCCO. THE REGUIBAT TRIBESMEN, WHO PROVIDE  
THE DOMINANT MILITARY AND POLITICAL FORCE IN THE POLISARIO,  
ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO MOROCCAN DOMINATION. IN  
ADDITION TO A LONG HISTORY OF REGUIBAT-MOROCCAN  
HOSTILITY, THE REGUIBAT ARE DEEPLY EMBITTERED OVER THE  
MISTREATMENT OF TRIBAL MEMBERS DURING MOROCCO'S TAKEOVER  
OF THE NORTHERN SAHARA.

40. THE CURRENT UNGA SESSION PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY  
FOR THE FORCES OF MODERATION--SUCH AS FRANCE, TUNISIA,  
EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA--TO PERSUADE THE MOROCCANS NOT TO  
PUSH FOR A RESOLUTION THAT SATISFIES ALL OF THEIR  
REQUIREMENTS. MOROCCO MAY BE PLANNING TO PUSH FOR A  
RESOLUTION NAMING ALGERIA AS AN AGGRESSOR AGAINST  
NEIGHBORING STATES.

41. THE MOROCCANS COULD BE ENCOURAGED INSTEAD TO SETTLE  
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FOR A MODERATE RESOLUTION, SIMILAR TO THAT ISSUED BY THE  
COLOMBO CONFERENCE, WHICH OFFERS BOTH SIDES A WAY OF  
DELAYING A CONFRONTATION. IF THE MOROCCANS COULD GARNER  
MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR SUCH A RESOLUTION, IT MIGHT DEPRIVE



THE ALGERIANS OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO CAST THE ISSUE IN TERMS OF SELF-DETERMINATION (WHICH NORMALLY ELICITS STRONG SUPPORT IN THE UNGA) AND PROVIDE MOROCCO'S FRIENDS A WATOUT OF HAVING TO LINE UP-WITH MOROCCO AGAINST THE MAJORITY.

42. THE TIMING OF THIS ISSUE IN THE UN--EARLY NOVEMBER--AFFORDS MODERATE FORCES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STRAIGHT TALK AND INTENSIVE POLITICKING WITH THE MOROCCANS AND FOR THE ARAB STATES, PARTICULARLY EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, TO DISCOURAGE THE ALGERIAN PREDILECTION FOR A SHOWDOWN ON THE ISSUE OF SELF-DETERMINATION. KISSINGER  
XUNQUOTE ROBINSON.

SECRET

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